CLAIMS

1. A system for licensing external processes on a computer comprising:

    an electronic license that identifies one or more software commands for registration;

    an interface that registers the identified software commands; and

    a command processor that executes the identified and registered software commands.

2. The system as set forth in claim 1 wherein the computer comprises a proxy cache server.

3. The system as set forth in claim 2 wherein the proxy cache server is part of a proxy cache server cluster that comprises a plurality of proxy cache servers interconnected over a network

4. The system as set forth in claim 2 wherein the electronic license further comprises one or more fields identifying a server version, the server version defining server models on which that the electronic license is valid.

5. The system as set forth in claim 1 wherein the electronic license includes one or more fields identifying a license expiration date, the license expiration date defining a period of time that the electronic license will allow access.

6. The system as set forth in claim 1 wherein the electronic license includes one or more fields identifying one or more hardware serial numbers, the hardware serial numbers corresponding to one or more computers on which the license is valid.

7. The system as set forth in claim 1 wherein the command includes means for restricting usage of predetermined hardware resources on the computer based upon the electronic license.

1   8.   The system as set forth in claim 7 wherein the electronic license includes one or

2   more fields identifying a set of hardware resources licensed for use, wherein only the set

3   of hardware resources licensed for use will be used by the command processor in

4   executing the identified and registered software commands.

1   9.   The system as set forth in claim 1 wherein the electronic license comprises a

2   license upgrade, the license upgrade including a software commands-to-register field

3   identifying another set of software commands that the interface may register in addition

4   to the software commands identified by one or more prior licenses.

1   10.   The system as set forth in claim 1 wherein the electronic license is a license

2   upgrade, the license upgrade containing one or more fields identifying additional

3   hardware resources licensed for use.

1   11.   The system as set forth in claim 1 wherein the electronic license is a license

2   upgrade, the license upgrade containing one or more fields identifying hardware

3   resources that add further capabilities to hardware resources previously licensed for use

4   by one or more prior licenses.

1   12.   The system as set forth in claim 1 wherein the electronic license is coded in

2   Extensible Markup Language (XML) and defines a set of codified command directives

3   that provide information that enables the interface to, either, accept or reject registration

4   of the identified software commands.

1   13.   The system as set forth in claim 1 wherein the electronic license includes a

2   software commands-to-register field including means for identifying inclusion of a root

3   software command, the root software command identifying all software commands that

4   share the root software command for registration and the interface being adapted to

5   register all software commands that share the root software command.

1 14.   The system as set forth in claim 13 wherein the software commands-to-register

2 field further includes means for identifying exclusion of a predetermined software

3 command from the software commands that share the root software command so as to

4 cause the interface to reject registration of the predetermined software command that is

5 excluded.

1 15.   A method for licensing external processes on a server comprising the steps of:

2   generating an electronic license that includes a plurality of software command

3 directives for accepting or rejecting registration, by one or more external processes, of

4 software commands; and

5   registering software commands based upon the software command directives; and

6   executing the registered commands.

1 16.   The method as set forth in claim 15 wherein the step of includes directing the one

2 or more external processes to only use a set of licensed hardware resources, the set of

3 licensed hardware resources being defined by one or more fields in the electronic license.

1 17.   The method as set forth in claim 15 wherein the step of generating includes

2 generating a license upgrade, the license upgrade defining a set of additional commands

3 for registration that are not part of software commands registered in conjunction with one

4 or more prior licenses.

1 18.   The method as set forth in claim 15 wherein the step of generating includes

2 generating a license upgrade, the license upgrade describing additional hardware

3 resources licensed for use by the one or more external processes that are not part of

4 hardware resources licensed for use by prior licenses.

1 19.   The method as set forth in claim 15 wherein the step of generating includes

2 generating a license upgrade, the license upgrade describing additional hardware

3 resources licensed for use by the one or more external processes that add further

4 capabilities to hardware resources licensed for use by prior licenses.

1　20.　The method as set forth in claim 15 further comprising either one of (a) installing

2　the electronic license in the server prior to shipment of the server to an end-user of the

3　server and (b) providing the electronic license to the end-user on a removable media for

4　installation in the server after the shipment of the server to the end-user.

1　21.　The method as set forth in claim 15 further comprising installing the electronic

2　license in the server in an over-the-wire process including (a) digitally signing the

3　electronic license by a vendor, (b) transmitting the digitally signed electronic license over

4　a communications network from the vendor to the server, (c) validating the digitally

5　signed electronic license by the server and (d) installing the validated electronic license in

6　the server.

1　22.　A computer-readable medium including program instructions executing on a

2　computer for licensing external processes on a server, the program instructions

3　performing the steps of:

4　　generating an electronic license that identifies one or more software commands

5　for registration;

6　　registering, with an interface, the identified software commands; and

7　　executing, with a command processor, the identified and registered software

8　commands.